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Dick, Jack and Cuba

President Kennedy seems to have been exonerated of the charge that he used confidential information for political advantage in the 1960 presidential campaign.

Richard M. Nixon thought he did, and said so in print.

The former vice-president wrote that campaigner Kennedy advocated American support for a Cuban invasion after learning from a Central Intelligence Agency briefing that the Eisenhower administration was actually training Cuban exiles for such an invasion.

Mr. Nixon, understandably, was pretty upset. He had pushed hard for an invasion, but felt conscience-bound not to reveal, as a campaigner, what he knew as the vice-president.

Now Allen Dulles, who was C.I.A. director in 1960 and the man who ought

to know just what Mr. Kennedy was told, says Mr. Nixon is mistaken; his opponent was not informed of the invasion plans before his election.

The whole incident, it seems to us, merely highlights the difficulties under which Mr. Nixon had to campaign. Not only was he the target for anti-administration attacks on policies with which he sometimes disagreed, but he was far more restricted by national security, as an insider, than was Mr. Kennedy, the outside critic. In this case, at least, Mr. Nixon was not free to defend his own beliefs.

Would it have made any difference in the outcome of the election if Mr. Nixon had not been so hampered?

That, we fear, belongs in the same category as the argument about whether Babe Ruth or Roger Maris was the better home run slugger.